(b) NAFED has informed that the NHRDF is managing its resources from increased feed production and distribution programmes. The NHRDF has also adopted economic measures by cutting down expenditure under various avoidable heads. It has also submitted more projects/schemes to National Horticulture Board on area expansion of onion, post harvest technology and seed production for financial assistance.

Reimbursement of 50% subsidy on Food Items to A.P.

2204. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has received any representation from the Andhra Pradesh Government that the Union Government should reimburse to the former fifty per cent of the subsidy required for distributing food items and other essential commodities in the State through the public distribution outlets;

(b) if so, details thereof and the reaction of Goverment thereto; and

(c) what other steps are being contemplated to contain the prices of essential commodities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. A request from the Government of Andhra Pradesh for financial assistance to the extent of Rs. 10.00 crores on matching basis for supply of non-PDS essential commodities through fair price shops in the State has been received. Similar requests from other State Governments have also been received. No. decision has been taken in the matter.

(c) The Government has accorded the highest priority to the control and stabilisation of prices of essential commodities. Imports of items which are in short supply, like pulses and onion, have been placed under OGL at zero percent import duty. Duty on the import of edible oils has been reduced to 15 percent from 25 percent in order to augment availability. Export of onions has been banned. The additional allocations of rice and wheat under the Public Distribution System (PDS) have been reviewed. A decision has been taken to release upto 40 lakh tonnes of wheat to the State Governments for open sale. Stringent action is being taken under the Essential Commodities Act and Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commudities Act by the State UT Governments against hoarders. black marketeers and other indulging in mal-practices in essential commodities.

NCCF supply to Government departments

2205. CHAUDHARY CHUNNILAL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether no infrastructure is available with the NCCF for supply of stationery and other items of office use Government departments and supplies are effected through local supliers;

(b) whether any local supplier can supply any brand of item and the suppliers are not selected item-wise;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the details of items supplied by the local suppliers and manufacturers/ distributors/dealers, duly authorised (suparately), giving the brand names thereof, the cost of supply to NCCF and the rate at which NCCF supplied to Government departments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV): (a) The NCCF, being an apex level consumer cooperative, have necessary infrastructurers to supply stationery and

other office use items to Govt. Departments. As regards supplies through local suppliers, the NCCF has informed that as far as possible, NCCF makes purchase of goods from manufacturers/distributors/dealers and in some cases, where there are no arrangements for supply of a particular item with the manufacturers/distributors/ dealers, the goods are purchased from the local suppliers.

(b) and (c) the NCCF has informed that for supply of branded items, suppliers are registered for specific items.

(d) Since the NCCF supplies a large number of items and the information sought for is very voluminous, the NCCF has informed that it is not practically possible to compile the same.

Loss due to fire in the Ministry of Food

2206. SHRI LAKKHIRAM AGARWAL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of loss due to fire in the Ministry of Food and its attached offices during 1992-93;

(b) the findings of the Enquiry Committee, alogwith the Police Findings Report;

(c) how much expenditure was incurred on purchase of furniture, stationery, typewriters, almirahs and wooden articles; the details therof; and

(d) whether there were a number of complaints against officials of the Ministry of Food and its attached offices for committing irregularity in the purchases and transferring of records/ furniture, etc., if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV): (a) A fire incident occurred on 16.10.92 in Krishi Bhavan. Thought there was no major damage to the rooms occupied by the then Ministry of Food, some of the rooms of Directorate of Sugar along with the official files records were damaged in the holocaust. The extent of loss/damage done due to above fire was worked out to the tune of approx. Rs. 10 lakhs. The fire also caused damage to the electricity/ telephone wiring etc. As the responsibility of the maintenance of the building/electricity and of telephones was of the CPWD and MTNL respectively, it is not possible to give the estimate of the damage and cost/expenditure incurred by them. Details of losses incurred by the Directorate of Sugar in the fire are given at statement-I. (*See* below).

(b) As per records available in the Ministry of Food & Consumer Affairs, Directorate of Sugar, no report was lodged with the police. However, a report on damages/loss to this Directorate was prepared and handed over to the then Ministry of Food for onward handing over to Police authorities.

(c) An approval of Rs. 5.87 lakh was obtained from the then Secretary (Food) for purchase of items essentially required for smooth functioning of the office after the fire incident. The final purchase was, however, limited to the tune of Rs. 5.15 lakhs only. In addition to that a sum of Rs. 5570/- was also spent by the Ministry on incidental expenses for clearing the water and cleaning the rooms etc. Details of expenditure incurred by the Directorate of Sugar on purchases are given at Statement-II. (*See* below)

(d) A complaint was received from the Vigilance Section of the Ministry of Food against the then Administrative Officer lodging therein irregularities committed by him in the purchases made after the fire incident. However, on scrutiny of records it was found that no irregularity was committed by him as all the purchases were made through the authorised government agencies after taking due approval of the competent authority and also no malafide or undue advantage was suspected. Therefore, the case against the concerned official has since been closed.